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Former CIA agent says book exposes illegal war

By DOUGLAS KELLNER

Former CIA case officer John Stockwell is being sued by the government for revealing information about the CIA operations in Angola, which he was in charge of during 1975, in his book, "In Search of Enemies."

Stockwell maintains that the publication of his book was a patriotic act which exposed the machinations of an illegal war and the lies of CIA Director William Colby and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, among others, who tried to cover up the CIA operation.

The government claims that Stockwell is violating CIA regulations not to reveal information about the agency without its prior permission and is invoking the recent Supreme Court decision against Frank Snepp, claiming that Snepp's book "Decent Interval" violated the CIA secrecy agreement.

Snepp was a former CIA official who criticized the agency's role during the evacuation of Saigon and was sued by the government in a case upheld by the Supreme Court.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL Liberties Union, the National Lawyers Guild and other groups claim that the Snepp decision is an intolerable restraint on the First Amendment freedom of speech. Moreover, the Center for National Security Studies claims that the CIA's prior censorship of books written by former agents is "erratic, unreliable and arbitrary," pointing out that a double standard is used to silence critics of the agency and to allow supporters of the CIA to publish information.

Civil libertarians claim that enforcement of secrecy agreements could be used to prevent government employees from revealing information about abuses of power and will deprive the public of the free flow of information necessary for a democratic society.

Stockwell claims that the CIA rules promote secrecy in government which produces the abuses of power evident in CIA operations and the whole "Watergate syndrome" and should be opposed by those who desire a free and open society.

Members of the University community will have an excellent opportunity to participate in debate over

these issues and others concerning the role of the CIA in American society. Beginning at 2 p.m. Thursday in Townes Hall 122, a panel consisting of Stockwell; Seymour Hersh, the Pulitzer Prize winner; Morton Halpern, assistant to the former national security adviser, who sued Kissinger; and John Henry Faulk, a victim of the McCarthy era.

Afterwards Stockwell will autograph copies of his book, "In Search of Enemies," which the University Co-Op will have available for sale. This will be followed by a cocktail fund-raiser at the Villa Capri Motor Hotel Club Room from 5 to 7 p.m. for Stockwell's legal defense. At 7 p.m. the award winning film on the CIA, "On Company Business," will be shown at the law school auditorium. On Friday a seminar on the CIA will take place with the participation of most of the panelists at Townes Hall 125.

JOHN STOCKWELL is in a privileged position to discuss the CIA. After being initially contacted by the CIA while a student at the University in the 1950s, Stockwell became a career officer in the CIA, serving in Africa, Vietnam and Washington.

His experience made him increasingly critical of the CIA, and eventually he decided to quit and to criticize its operations which he found morally wrong and counter to America's interests.

Stockwell asserts that the agency vacillates between being an incompetent bureaucracy which fails to produce adequate intelligence, and a "dirty tricks" outfit whose illegal and frequently repugnant actions turn the people of the world against the United States and dangerously heighten tensions in every corner of the globe. He sees secrecy in government as eroding democracy and as promising authoritarian government.

For these reasons, Stockwell feels that the CIA discussions this week will enable us all to hear and discuss Stockwell's controversial views and should be attended by all those concerned about the future of American democracy.

Kellner is an associate professor of philosophy.